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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE OF GOVERNOR -- A CONTRARY VIEW

REF: (A) BASRAH 49: (B) BASRAH 53 (C) BASRAH 58

CLASSIFIED BY: Ken Gross, Regional Coordinator, REO Basrah,
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REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Sheikh Mansour al-Khanaan, leader of the al-Khanaan tribe, met with the Regional Coordinator (RC) of the Regional Embassy Office in Basrah on April 18 to review the current political picture in Basrah (for background on Sheikh Mansour see Ref A). After a quick discussion of the unprecedented deterioration of the security environment, Sheikh Mansour addressed the plan to vote Governor Muhammad out of office by certain Basrah Provincial Council members and their allies (see Refs B and C for more on this scheme).

¶2. (C) Sheikh Mansour said that the plan to unseat the governor would not work and added that he was "100 percent sure it will not be successful." He believed that divisions and divergent interests among the main conspirators - Sayid Yusif, Majed al-Sari and Hassan al-Rashid - were too deep to allow them to cooperate effectively. Besides this, he asserted, they did not have the two-thirds majority on the Provincial Council to replace the governor with Hassan al-Rashid.

¶3. (C) If such an attempt took place, Sheikh Mansour said that the governor's forces and al-Rashid's Badr Organization would fight it out on the streets. Sheikh Mansour warned that ousting the governor, without choosing the correct successor, would not improve the political or security situation. No one presently on the Basrah Provincial Council, in his view, would be a good candidate for governor.

4 (C) Comment: Sheikh Mansour's opinions on the likelihood of success of the plan to replace the governor and the possibility of violence following such an attempt are at odds with those of Provincial Council member Sayid Ghali and Ministry of Defense advisor Majed al-Sari. Perhaps this illustrates how murky the political waters of Basrah are - there is no shortage of political seers, but not everyone's crystal ball shows the same scenario. What all parties agree upon is that security in Basrah, with daily reports of assassinations and killings, has deteriorated so much that life for the common citizen is becoming untenable.

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